

First, my balanced budget plan makes an unprecedented commitment to education technology, doubling the technology literacy initiative the Vice President just mentioned and providing a total of \$500 million for computers, teacher training, and educational software for our schools.

Second, we're working to ensure that every school and library can afford the Internet. Under the Telecommunications Act, the Federal Communications Commission is now developing a plan to give schools and libraries access to the Internet at a dramatically discounted rate. Fees for most schools will be cut in half. Fees for our poorest schools will be almost free. I urge the FCC to act quickly. And I call upon the telecommunications industry to support this effort.

Third, this April 19th, parents, teachers, business people, and volunteers from all walks of life will answer our call and hold NetDays in

all 50 States, connecting tens of thousands of schools, classrooms, and libraries to the Internet.

By doubling our investment in education technology, by dramatically lowering the Internet rates for schools and libraries by mobilizing Americans all across the country to help wire our schools, we will meet our goal of connecting every classroom and library to the information superhighway by the year 2000. That's how we must prepare our children for the 21st century, with the full promise of the information age at their fingertips. And it's an important way to give our children the world's best education and the chance to make the most of their own lives.

Thanks for listening.

NOTE: The address was recorded at 12:38 p.m. on February 7 in the Roosevelt Room at the White House for broadcast at 10:06 a.m. on February 8.

Remarks to the Maryland General Assembly in Annapolis, Maryland February 10, 1997

Thank you all for that wonderful reception. Thank you, Mr. Speaker, for what you said. Thank you, Senator Miller, for that 10-year walk down memory lane. *[Laughter]* It is true that when I met his mother I fell in love with her, even before I found out she had 10 kids. *[Laughter]* It's not often you meet a person who can elect you if her family votes for you. *[Laughter]*

Thank you, Governor Glendening, for your leadership here on so many issues. Lieutenant Governor Kathleen Kennedy Townsend, Attorney General Curran, Treasurer Dixon, my old friend Comptroller Louie Goldstein. I was in the first grade when he became comptroller. *[Laughter]* The walking argument against term limits, you know. It's amazing. *[Laughter]*

I'd like to thank so many Members of your very distinguished congressional delegation for joining me today: Senator Sarbanes and Senator Mikulski; Representative Wayne Gilchrest, your Congressman; Representative Connie Morella; Representative Ben Cardin; Representative Al Wynn; and Representative Elijah Cummings.

Now, I know that Ben was formerly the speaker here and that Al and Elijah and Connie and Senator Sarbanes were all members of this body. It kind of makes you wonder how Senator Mikulski and Congressman Gilchrest got elected to Congress. *[Laughter]* It's obviously a good training program here. *[Laughter]*

I'd like to thank the president of the Maryland State Board of Education, Christopher Cross, for being here. When he worked for President Bush, he and I stayed up all night one night writing the national education goals, which began the process which bring us to this point today. Thank you, sir, for being here. And I'd like to thank your State superintendent of education, Nancy Grasmick, for being here.

Then there are two people who are not here, who are here with us in spirit, and I would like to ask that we all remember them today, our good friend Congressman Steny Hoyer and his late wife, Judy, who was one of the finest educators this State ever had. And I know we miss them today. Steny and his family are in

our prayers, and we are grateful for the dedication of Judy Hoyer's life to the children and the people of Maryland.

I would also like to say I'm very glad to be here with two members of my Cabinet, Secretary of Education Dick Riley and the Secretary of Health and Human Services, Donna Shalala. They have served our administration and, more importantly, the American people exceptionally well, and I thank them for their presence here today. And when I finish talking, if you want anything else, call them. [*Laughter*]

I should also say, since Senator Miller mentioned it, that my college roommate, who lived on the Eastern Shore, Tom Kaplan, is here. And he's still my friend after all these years, which is either a great tribute to his patience or to the roots and values of the people of Maryland. So I'm glad he's here.

I wanted to come here today to talk in greater detail about the issues I discussed in the State of the Union that require us to prepare America for the 21st century. It is important that we gather here at this turning point in our history. It was, after all, in this statehouse that George Washington resigned his commission as general of the Continental Army. In fact, it was right down the hall in the Lieutenant Governor's office that Thomas Jefferson wrote George Washington's words of resignation. It was here that the Treaty of Paris was prepared and ratified, ending the Revolutionary War and beginning the greatest experiment in democracy and opportunity the world has ever known.

Just think what began here in this building. What an experiment it has been, all the turmoil we have survived, the Civil War, the two World Wars, the cold war, the social upheaval, all the triumphs of our country in civil rights and women's rights, the environmental movement, workers' rights, bringing in all the immigrants, the explosion in science and technology, the political, the economic, the social achievements of this country. What an incredible experiment it has been since the events of so long ago when the treaty ending the Revolutionary War was signed and ratified here.

At each step along the way, how did we keep growing, how did we overcome, how did we work through, how did we reach higher? We always had responsible citizens. We were always able to come together as one country. And we were always driven by a clear vision.

I would argue to you that we are at another turning point today, and we need responsible citizens, a united country, and a clear vision. We face a moment of peace and prosperity, and it gives us an extraordinary opportunity to actually decide what kind of future we want for America in the 21st century and then go to work to build it. It is very important that we understand that such moments are extremely rare in our history.

We have perhaps had only one before. After World War II, we dominated the world economically. We were the most powerful country in the world militarily. We had some ability to decide our future, and thank goodness we did the right thing with the Marshall plan and rebuilding Europe and Japan, our former friends and our former foes. But we were constrained by the cold war.

At the beginning of this century probably is the time most like this one when we entered the industrial era as a powerful and wealthy country at peace. But never have we been quite like this, as the world's only superpower, just completing 4 years where we produced more new jobs than at any other 4-year period in our history, looking toward a world that is full of troubles, to be sure, but so full of explosive opportunities.

We have an incredible responsibility—we in America and you in Maryland. Thanks to the leadership of your Governor and the work that all of you have done, unemployment's at a 6-year low. Things are going well for you here. Your family incomes have risen to fourth in the Nation. Your welfare rolls have dropped almost 25 percent since 1995. Student achievement has risen, and more schools are meeting the high standards you have set. We are well positioned.

But it is a moment of choice. We cannot afford to squander this moment in complacency or division. That's normally what happens to people when they sort of get happy and satisfied. They get complacent, or they fall out over little things. And this is not a time for us to squander in petty bickering or small ambitions. This is a time for us to build a new century.

We have to meet all the challenges we still have. There are still too many poor children in this country and too many lives of children being lost on the streets of America every day. There are still too many of our areas in our cities and isolated rural areas that have not felt the uplift of the economic recovery. We still

have not balanced the budget. We still have not finished all the unfinished business of the cold war. Not everybody who works hard is feeling the opportunities that are available in America. We have unfinished business.

Then we have new challenges that we have to face. We have to prepare for the aging of the baby boomers. I know I'm the oldest one; that's a self-interest plea here, I think. [Laughs] We have to prepare for the aging of the baby boomers. We have to make sure that we're ready for this new worldwide competition. We have to meet the new security threats of the 21st century, in terrorism and ethnic and religious and racial conflicts. We have to meet the new environmental challenges of the 21st century, most of which will be global in nature.

So there are challenges out there. But the most important thing is, there are staggering opportunities. More people will have more chances to live out their dreams than any people who ever lived in the history of the Earth, if we do the right things—if we do the right things.

We have worked for the last 4 years essentially to try to make sure America works again, that we are functioning at a reasonable level of proficiency so that we can have the freedom to do that, to shape our future. And we have changed the economic course of this country away from supply-side economics to investment economics, to move toward a balanced budget, to reduce the deficits, the interest rates, to expand our trade around the world and to invest in our people. And the results have been good.

We've tried to move the debate over social policy in Washington away from rhetoric to reality, centered on families and communities. You've got now 5 years of declining crime. You've got the biggest drop in welfare rolls in history. You've got real efforts being made through the family leave law and other things to help people succeed in raising their children and in the workplace. We're in a position now to know what works and to know that we can have confidence that if we work together, we can make a difference in assaulting our most profound challenges here at home.

We've tried to define the role of Government away from the old fight that's dominated America almost ever since World War II, to say Government is not the problem; Government is not the solution. Government's job is to create the conditions and give people the tools to solve

their problems and make the most of their own lives.

So now we have this chance. And it's hard when you're not threatened by a foreign enemy to whip people up to a fever pitch of common, intense, sustained, disciplined endeavor. But that is what we must do, my fellow Americans. That is what we must do.

We are strong enough to shape a future that will take advantage of all this life-enhancing technology, of these new economic opportunities, of the new opportunities we have to build a structure of peace around the world, of the new opportunities we have to put the information age at the fingertips of the poorest as well as the wealthiest children in our country. And we had better do this. Our children and our grandchildren will never forgive us if we blow this chance to make their future the best future in the history of this country.

It is obvious that to prepare our people for the 21st century we will need a new, more far-reaching, deeper partnership in America. The era of big Government is over, both because we can't go on running national deficits till the end of time and because the nature of our problems requires a different approach. But the era of big national challenges is far from over. It will never be over. And the ones we face are very big indeed.

National leadership can point the way. It can move barriers out of the way that have prevented our States, our cities, and our people from solving their own problems. But the real responsibilities of building this future are ones we all must bear together. I will do my part. I will do what I can to see that the National Government does its part. But in turn, you must work with me and with others to make sure that we seize this opportunity while we stand strong enough to do so.

Today I want to talk about two critical areas, giving our children the best education and finishing the job of welfare reform, breaking the cycle of dependency, moving millions of more people from welfare to work. Taken together, these issues really are at the core of our national mission to prepare America for the 21st century.

Everyone must have the tools to succeed in the knowledge economy. That means education and training. Everyone willing to work hard with those tools must have a chance to do so. That means finishing the job of welfare reform. Education and welfare reform are about bringing

all Americans to the starting line of the economy, then making sure all of them are ready to run the race. Our number one priority must be to ensure that America has the best education in the world.

I cannot add much to the statement we made so long ago in the national education goals, 7 years ago now—almost 8 years ago—but my shorthand statement is: Every 8-year-old has to be able to read, every 12-year-old should be able to log on to the Internet, every 18-year-old should be able to go to college, and every adult American should be able to keep on learning for an entire lifetime. That should be our goal.

Because our future was at stake in the cold war, we had a bipartisan foreign policy. Politics stopped at the water's edge. Well, now our future is at stake, in large measure depending upon whether we can give all of our people world-class education. Therefore, we must have a nonpartisan commitment to education, and politics should stop at the schoolhouse door in the 21st century.

It is not enough for Members of Congress and members of the State legislatures and elected executives to embrace this commitment. Our businesses, our educators, our parents, all our citizens must make the same commitment. I'm gratified that you have a number of Maryland parents and teachers and business people committed to education here today. I thank them for being here, and I thank you for inviting them.

In my State of the Union Address, I laid out a 10-point call to action for American education, which is embodied in this booklet. And I want to say just a few words about a number of issues today and then focus on one in particular. And I want to thank the State of Maryland for taking the lead in doing so many of the right things. A lot of you have worked with me, going back long years in the past when I was a Governor, on these educational issues, and I thank you for what you've done.

First, every child has to be able to read independently by the third grade. I'm pleased that the University of Maryland at College Park has already pledged more than 2,300 of its students to work as reading tutors over the next 5 years. That is a great thing. We're going to use 35,000 of our AmeriCorps volunteers to help to try to mobilize a million of these students. We think we can get at least 100,000 out of the new

work-study students approved by Congress in the last budget. Then all the schools have to make use of volunteers once they are trained. But we have to do this.

You just think about it. If 40 percent of our children can't read at grade level, how in the wide world do we expect them to learn algebra, trigonometry, calculus, physics, biology, chemistry? It is very important. Unless we get this done, the rest cannot happen. And it is going to take a national effort of monumental proportions to do it. But we can do it, because the children can do it. The children can do it. They just need for us to do our job, and they then will do the rest. So I want you to help us to finish that job.

We must expand public school choice. And Baltimore City has done that through its charter schools. We must rebuild crumbling schools. And you heard the Governor say that's a priority for him as well. We must make it possible for all of our children to have access—the same access, in the same time, to the same knowledge. That's what hooking up all these classrooms to the Internet is all about. And I thank Maryland for its commitment to that objective.

In the last 4 years, we have opened the doors of college wider than ever before through the direct college loan program and expanded Pell grants, 200,000 more work-study positions, and the AmeriCorps program. But we have to do more. And I am very pleased, Governor, that you have proposed these State HOPE scholarships to open the doors of college.

I just came back from Georgia—Secretary Riley and I went to Augusta—230,000 people in the State of Georgia who maintained a B average have had their tuition and their schoolbooks paid for by the State HOPE scholarship program. In a representative crowd there, I had person after person after person of all ages telling me, "I was a HOPE scholar; I had a chance to go to college; I never could have done it otherwise; I wouldn't have made it otherwise."

There is no better expenditure of our money. It will raise the per capita income of this State more quickly. It will get over inequalities in income groups more quickly, and it will bring people together for a stronger future more quickly than anything else.

So I applaud the proposal you have put before the legislature here, and I also tell you I will do my best to pass our national version of the HOPE scholarship to give a tax credit of \$1,500

for 2 years—that's the typical cost of community college tuition—and a tax deduction of up to \$10,000 a year for the cost of tuition for any education after high school. This will make a difference.

We also propose making the IRA available to more savers and then let people withdraw from their IRA tax-free if the money is used to pay for education—and the biggest increase in Pell grant scholarships for needy students in 20 years. And our "GI bill" for America's workers would take the 70 different Federal programs for job training, put them in one big block, and send a skill grant to an unemployed or an underemployed worker and say, "Here, you take it to the nearest institution of education and get the training you need." Nearly every American lives within driving distance of a community college or another community-based university or educational institution that can provide the training today that all people know they need to have a better future. So we need to do these things together, and they will make a big difference.

I also believe we have to teach our children to be good citizens as well as good students. And I'd like to thank the Lieutenant Governor for supporting the statewide program of character education you have here, to have a statewide code of discipline, to remove disruptive students from the classroom, to promote community curfews. And again, I thank you for being the only State in America to require community service to graduate from high school. You have the first class of seniors graduating today. That's a good thing. That's a good thing.

To give you some idea how long it takes for some of these things to catch on, 10 years ago, in 1987, the then-Republican Governor of New Jersey and now the president of Drew University, Tom Kean, and I cochaired a Carnegie commission study on middle school, and one of our recommendations was that national service should be a requirement for public school students. People should learn that they are connected to others in their community and make it a positive, good, wholesome thing. Only Maryland has done it so far. But I certainly hope—perhaps my presence here will help—I hope other States will follow your lead. This is an important part of building a common future for America.

Let me say the most important thing we can do in education is to hold our students to high

standards. Children will grow according to the expectations we have of them. They cannot be expected to know what it is they should know or even how high they can soar until we give them the right set of expectations. When 40 percent of our third graders are not reading as well as they should or, to put it in plain language, when 40 percent of 8-year-olds cannot read a book on their own that they ought to be able to read, we have a lot to do. When students in Germany or Singapore learn 15 to 20 math subjects in depth each year, while our students typically race through 30 to 35 without learning any in depth in a given year, we aren't doing what we should be doing to prepare them for a knowledge economy that demands that they be able to think and reason and analyze, in short, demands that they be able to learn for a lifetime of working in ways that have not yet been invented, perhaps not yet even imagined. This is impossible without a good foundation in the basics.

Maryland is making a good start. You've developed clear standards for what children should learn by the third, fifth, and eighth grades, in particular, in reading and math, and clear tests to measure them school district by school district and school by school. You're holding schools accountable for making the grade, rewarding excellence, intervening in schools that aren't performing. Because you have set high standards, you have seen 5 years of steady, sustained progress toward meeting those standards.

But Maryland and all other States must do more. To compete and win in the 21st century, we must have a high standard of excellence that all States agree on. That is why I called, in my State of the Union Address, for national standards of excellence in the basics, not Federal Government standards but national standards representing what all our students must know to succeed in a new century. I called upon every State to test every fourth grader in reading and every eighth grader in math by 1999, according to the national standards, to make sure they're being met.

We already have widely accepted rigorous national standards in both reading and math and widely used tests based on those standards. In reading, Maryland and more than 40 other States have participated in a test called the National Assessment of Education Progress or, as all of us educational junkies call it, the NAEP test. It measures a State's overall performance

against a high national standard of excellence. It's a good test. In math, tens of thousands of students across our Nation have already taken the Third International Math and Science Survey, called the TIMSS test, a test that reflects the world-class standards our children must meet for the new era. As I said in my State of the Union, last month Secretary Riley and I visited northern Illinois, where eighth grade students from 20 districts took the test and tied for first in the world for science and second in math. We know it is the world standard, and we know the world standard is the right standard to which we should all hold ourselves.

Unfortunately, these current tests, both the Assessment of Education Progress for the fourth grade reading test and the Third International Survey in Math and Science for the eighth graders, do not provide individual scores; they only measure how an entire State is doing. What we need are tests that will measure the performance of each and every student, each and every school, each and every district, so that parents and teachers will know how every child is doing compared to other students in other schools, other States, and other countries, not just compared to them but, more importantly, compared against what they need to know.

It is a false thing to compare all kids against one another unless all children are first held to a high standard. That's what we want to know. That's the only thing that really matters. That is why I'm presenting a plan to help all students in all States meet these standards and to measure them.

Over the next 2 years, our Department of Education will support the development for new tests for fourth grade reading based on the National Assessment of Education Progress and eighth grade math based on the International Math and Science Survey, to show how every student measures up to existing, widely accepted standards. These tests will be developed by independent test experts in consultation with leading math and reading teachers. The Federal Government will not require them, but they will be available to every State and every school district that chooses to administer them. I believe every State must participate and that every parent has a right to honest, accurate information about how his or her child is doing based on real, meaningful national standards.

Now, already in the last week I have heard some people saying, "Sounds like a Federal

power grab to me." That's nonsense. We will not attempt to require them. They are not Federal Government standards. They are national standards. But we have been hiding behind a very small fig leaf for very long, and the results are not satisfactory. Anybody who says that a country as big and diverse as ours can't possibly have national standards in the basics, I say from Maryland to Michigan to Montana, reading is reading and math is math. No school board is in charge of algebra, and no State legislature can enact the laws of physics. And it is time we started acting the way we know we should.

There's another thing that will be said now and that you will have to confront, because I know how much—I've been through a zillion State legislative sessions; everybody's got a new idea and everybody wants more money and there's never enough to go around. And you will be told—and it is true—that we have lots of standardized tests. That's true, there are lots of standardized tests, but there is no national test testing the standards. That's a very different thing. There is no national exam given to all of our children that says, here's what a good fourth grader ought to learn.

Keep in mind, we don't want Johnny to make a better score than Mary on this test. We want 100 percent of our kids to pass this test. And then when a lot of them don't, we don't want to give them an F. We want to give them a hand up. We want to say, "We haven't done what we should, and we're going to do this."

It is amazing, you know, we take it for granted we have the best military in the world. Think how silly it would be if everyplace in America where we do basic training, they said, "Well, you know, Louisiana is a long way from Georgia. We couldn't have possibly have uniform standards for basic training in the military. Just sort of come up with whatever you think will be good, and we'll hope it works the next time we're in the Persian Gulf." [Laughter] You're laughing. That's what we do. And even if you do the very best you can, we don't know the truth. It's wrong for these children not to know the truth. This is not a put-down, now, this is a lift-up.

We've got the most diverse democracy in the world. We have 4 school districts now where the children's first languages comprise over 100 different languages, in 4 school districts in America. Who are we kidding that we're going to create the kind of country we want, where

everybody's got a chance to make it, when we haven't even taken the first elemental step to say, here's how everyone should read by the fourth grade; here's the math everybody ought to know by the eighth grade?

There is more to do after that, but let's start with something that really matters. We've never done it. This has nothing to do with local control of education. Secretary Riley has done more to get rid of Federal rules and regulations, to give States and local school districts more control without the rules and more flexibility than anybody has in a long time. But no matter how much flexibility you have, sooner or later your children are going to have to face the fact that they either can read or they can't, they either can do the math or they can't, they know algebra or they don't. And if we play around with all these games and hide-and-seek excuses, in the end the only people that are going to be hurt are those kids, and the rest of the country will pay the price from now on. And we've got to stop it. *[Applause]* Thank you.

I want to give you two pieces of good news, one of which you can be especially proud of. You all know that the business community has been calling for this for a long time. Governor Glendening was recently with the other Governors last year at an education summit in New York with the business community, and they were saying we have to have standards. Today I'm proud to say that the national Business Roundtable is endorsing our call for national tests for fourth grade reading and eighth grade math. They will join our crusade to make American education the best in the world. And I want to thank especially Norm Augustine, who is the CEO of Lockheed Martin and the head of the Business Roundtable's education task force and who has done a lot to help you in Maryland with your schools. Just before the speech today, your State board of education chairman, Chris Cross, told me that the State board of education intends to incorporate these news tests of national standards into your State's program. And I thank you, sir, for that, and I thank you for that.

Let me say that throughout my public career, I have been very interested in this whole issue of education. There are lots of other things I'd like to talk to you about today. I hope you will support the work that we are doing with the National Board of Certification for Master Teachers, to certify teachers in educational ex-

cellence. Governor Hunt from North Carolina has been working on that for years, and we certified the last teachers—the first teachers in 1995 but only 500 since 1995. We believe we need at least one master teacher in every school district, hopefully in every school in America, someone who has been through the special, rigorous program of training and evaluation here so that then that teacher can share what he or she has learned with all the other teachers in the school. Our budget contains enough funds—and it's a relatively low-cost program—to provide for another 100,000 master teachers in the next 4 years. So I hope you will support that as well.

But let me say—I guess you can tell I feel strongly about this, but I have spent a lot of time in our schools, a lot of time listening to teachers, a lot of time listening to parents. I've worked harder on this issue over the course of my public life than anything else because it has a unique role in our history and an even more powerful role in our future. It is, of course, the key to individual opportunity. It is also the key to responsible citizenship. I am convinced it is the key to giving us the understanding we need to live together as one nation in the midst of all of our diversity. It is also the key to maintaining our world leadership for peace and freedom and prosperity. Only if every American has the full use of his or her mind can our country move forward together.

So I hope that all of you will keep this in mind. I hope that you will push this, and I hope you will lead the way. I want to be able to take this crusade across the country and tell people, if they don't believe we can do it, call Maryland. You've had the courage to do it. Stand up. *[Applause]*

Now, let me just say a couple of words about welfare reform, because that's very important. For years and years and years, all the Governors—I was one of them—said we want more control over the State's welfare system; we want to do that. We could reform the welfare system. We could make it work. We could end the culture of poverty and dependency. Well, you got it. *[Laughter]* And this has got to be a focus of your efforts now, because this is very, very important.

We ended the old welfare system basically in two steps. First of all, in the last 4 years, Secretary Shalala and I worked with 43 of the 50 States to launch welfare reform experiments

which, along with a growing economy and a 50 percent increase in child support collection—something I'm very proud of—helped to reduce the welfare rolls by 2¼ million. That's the biggest drop in welfare rolls in the history of the country, an 18 percent drop. You can be proud of that and proud of what you did. Here in Maryland you did better than the national average. You used your waiver to move 51,000 people off the welfare rolls, and you had about a 25 percent drop. And you can be proud of that.

You also answered my call to revoke the driver's licenses of people who deliberately—who can and don't pay their child support. And I think that's a good thing. We're going to do more to collect child support. We can move 800,000 more people off welfare tomorrow if people just paid the child support they owe and that they are capable of paying. So I thank you for that.

Now we come to the hard part. The new law, supported by the Governors and all State associations, says that every able-bodied person on welfare must move to work within 2 years, that the States can have a little cushion fund to support those who can't move into the work force either because they're disabled or because the economy is not so hot.

But now, think of this challenge. In the last 4 years, 2¼ million people moved from welfare to work in an economy that produced 11.5 million jobs. That's a record for any 4-year administration. We have to do at least that well in the next 4 years. That reduced the welfare rolls by about 20 percent, 18 to 20 percent.

So you've got about 10 million people left and about—maybe a little more than 10 million—and about 4½ million of them are adults and about 4 million, anyway, are going to be able-bodied and able enough to physically work. And then there will be some moving in and out of the work force as there always is, as people retire and all. But through deliberate efforts we're going to have to create at least 2 million jobs. And if we don't do it, what will happen?

Keep in mind, this welfare reform bill has this ringing declaration: Everybody who can work, everybody who's able to work has to take responsibility for their own lives, no more permanent dependency full of moral precepts. Well, the morality shoe is now on the other foot. Those of us who supported that, we now have

a moral obligation to say, everybody we told, "You have to go to work" actually is able to work. Because if we are not able to do that, then the law's consequence will not be to liberate people from dependency but to make people who are dying to go to work even worse off just because they couldn't find a job.

This is a serious, stiff challenge. And the challenge is primarily on you and the employer community, which is the way you said you wanted it. But it's there now. You know that great old country music star Chet Atkins used to say, "You got to be careful what you ask for in this life; you might get it." So here it is. What are we going to do? Is there a way out? Yes, there is. Can we do this? You bet we can. You bet we can. We can to it, but we have to do it together. And we have to do it with discipline. And we need a plan. And it needs to go down to every community. And we're going to have to ask people to help. And you need to really closely follow your numbers and make sure you're doing what it takes to be done.

How are we going to do it? First, we have to pass the Federal program that I recommended, which will give tax credits to private employers of up to 50 percent of a salary up to \$10,000 to hire people, only if they hire people from welfare to work. And then we have to support the provisions of the welfare reform law which continue the health care, continue the nutrition, and provide much more money for child care than the previous law. That's the good news.

This legislation also gives you the authority for the first time to take money that had been used on welfare checks and give it to private employers as a wage or training supplement. Now, this can be very important in convincing nonprofit employers who don't pay taxes anyway to hire people off welfare and make an extra effort. All the community nonprofits, every church or other religious organization in the State of Maryland of any size, without regard to their faith, they're all under an admonition to care for the poor. Now you can say, "We'll give you a little money to help, if you will do the rest."

Missouri had a program like this in Kansas City, where they gave the welfare check to private employers for more than a year—they could keep it for a couple years—as a wage and training premium if they would hire people off welfare. I met a man who had a data-processing

storage company with 25 employees, and 5 of his employees he'd hired from the welfare rolls, and he loved it. And they loved it.

And if we can do it, it is better to hire people in small groups or one-on-one, because you're trying to lift people out of a culture of dependency into a mainstream culture of work. But this man was willing to do that. And they have to pay about \$1.75 above the minimum wage to get the wage subsidy there and to give people a living income. But still it costs them less than the minimum wage to do it.

Florida has just decided to follow suit. And I hope other States will follow that lead. You've got to—believe me—to meet these job targets, your employer community is going to need every last option you can give them. And somebody's got to have a plan—I mean a game plan, that challenges every sector and every community to do what has to be done. So I urge you to use the flexibility you have been given to do that.

Secondly, I urge you to make sure that the money you have saved from welfare reform will be used to move even more people to work. I know Maryland has taken its considerable savings from welfare reform efforts and put them into a special rainy-day fund to create jobs and to move people from welfare to work. And that's something other States ought to copy, because if welfare reform is going to succeed in the beginning, all States are going to have to use those savings on efforts like child care, wage subsidies, employment incentives, or other ways to create private sector jobs.

Let me just say one other thing. I hope as you do this you will not forget a sort of a parallel population not on welfare, and those are young, single men who are unemployed who are eligible for food stamps but not welfare. Keep in mind, their loss to the work force is an enormous loss to our society. It leads to higher crime. It leads to fewer two-parent families. It leads to robbing them of the potential of what they might become. And a lot of places now are beginning to try to—instead of talking just about the welfare population—[inaudible]—the young, unemployed population so that these young, single men can be treated in the right way, too.

And in Missouri, what they did, we gave them a waiver, and they actually took the food stamp payments for the young, single men and gave them to employers with the same sort of incen-

tive as the welfare payments for young women going from welfare to work. So I urge you to think about that.

Finally, let me say, what is our vision? I can tell you what my vision—why do we do all this? Here's my vision. Here's where I hope we'll be in a few years. I hope all over America in a few years, we will have a community-based, employment-family support system for people who are out of work and people will come into this system whether they come off the welfare rolls or off the employment rolls through the unemployment rolls and we won't make a distinction. It will just be good people with kids or without kids, depending, who are out of work who need to get back into the work force. And we'll have a system for moving them back in, and we'll have a system of subsidies for people at the margins so that employers will be encouraged to make that extra effort to restore people to the dignity of work. And meanwhile, we'll always be helping people support their children in fulfilling their first and most important job.

Now, that's my vision. That's what I hope we would get out of this welfare reform effort. But the next 2 years are going to be critical, because about 2 years from now, people are going to start running out of their 2-year time limit, and then the spotlight will shift from all of them to all of us. And we will be asked, what did we do when the welfare reform bill passed? What did we do to make sure that those we told, "You have to go to work," had the chance to go to work? So I urge you to think about this.

This is exciting, but it's bracing, because our society has never done anything like this before in ordinary times. And I do not believe that when the bill passed, people had really focused on the dimensions of the challenge. I had, and I was willing to make it. I'm willing to try to—to jump off this cliff, to hold up this high standard. I think we can do this. I think we can develop a work-based society that does not have people trapped in permanent dependence. But it's going to take everybody thinking about it, working on it, and doing things they had not done in the past. And so I ask you to do that.

I just want to make one final point the Governor's already mentioned. I know Maryland is considering using its own money to continue providing some basic benefits for legal immigrants who have lost Federal aid now that the Federal bans have taken effect. That's the right

thing to do, but you shouldn't have to do it all by yourself. That's why every State and every Governor, Republican or Democrat, I hope will join with us to try to persuade the Congress to restore just the basic health and disability benefits that used to be available until this new law passed when misfortune strikes them.

The argument made by the majority when they passed this was, when an immigrant comes to America, you've got to sign a piece of paper that says you're not going to take public benefits. Now, that's an understandable policy. We shouldn't be inviting people to come here just to get on welfare or to get on Medicaid or Medicare. But we can solve that, and did, by simply saying that every immigrant has a sponsor and the sponsor's income will be deemed the immigrant's income until the immigrant becomes a citizen. That's the way to solve that.

But if you have all these immigrants coming here, and even before they can become citizens—suppose an Indian from New Delhi comes to Maryland to develop computer software programs for one of your growing businesses, and stays here 3 years, and has a 1-year-old child and a 3-year-old child. What does that person do if he or his spouse gets hit by a car or is the victim of a crime or one of the children is born with cerebral palsy and they don't have regular health care that will take care of all these things?

What do we say? "Tough luck. You had misfortune. Yes, you've worked hard; yes, you've paid your taxes; yes, you've been perfectly legal; yes, you've complied with every provision of the

law; yes, you didn't try to sneak in our country, you waited your turn just like everybody else, but I'm sorry. Yes, we took the benefit of your brain; you made us a richer, stronger country; we wanted you in here; you had skills we needed, but I'm sorry"? This is wrong, folks. This is unworthy of a great nation of immigrants, and we ought to fix it.

When you get right down to it, all this business about education reform and welfare reform and what do we have to do to prepare our country for the 21st century and will we have the discipline, strength, and courage to take advantage of this unique moment in history—it really comes down to two questions: What does America mean, and what does it mean to be an American?

America must always be a nation becoming. We're never there. We're always becoming: becoming a more perfect union, full of new promise for our own people and new hopes for the world. And what does it mean to be an American? We're the ones who have to make that happen.

Thank you, and God bless you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 11:20 a.m. at the Maryland State House. In his remarks, he referred to Casper R. Taylor, Jr., speaker, Maryland House of Delegates, and Thomas V. Miller, Jr., president, Maryland State Senate; Gov. Parris N. Glendening of Maryland; State Attorney General J. Joseph Curran, Jr.; State Treasurer Thomas N. Dixon; and State Comptroller Louis L. Goldstein.

Message to the Congress on Canadian Whaling Activities *February 10, 1997*

To the Congress of the United States:

On December 12, 1996, Secretary of Commerce Michael Kantor certified under section 8 of the Fishermen's Protective Act of 1967, as amended (the "Pelly Amendment") (22 U.S.C. 1978), that Canada has conducted whaling activities that diminish the effectiveness of a conservation program of the International Whaling Commission (IWC). The certification was based on the issuance of whaling licenses by the Government of Canada in 1996 and the

subsequent killing of two bowhead whales under those licenses. This message constitutes my report to the Congress pursuant to subsection (b) of the Pelly Amendment.

In 1991, Canadian natives took a bowhead whale from the western Arctic stock, under a Canadian permit. In 1994, Canadian natives took another bowhead whale from one of the eastern Arctic stocks, without a permit.